

William Fitch Conrad

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NOTABLE DEATHS.

RT. REV. THOMAS MATTHIAS LENIHAN was born at Dubuque, Iowa, May 12, 1845; he died at Marshalltown, Iowa, Dec. 16, 1901. He was educated for the priesthood at the Catholic schools at Bardstown, Ky., Cape Girardeau, Mo., and Milwaukee, Wis. After he was ordained he became pastor of St. Benedict's church at Decorah, Iowa, where he remained from 1868 to 1870. He went thence to Ft. Dodge, where he took charge of Corpus Christi church, and remained until he was appointed Bishop of Cheyenne. Immediately upon receiving his promotion he crossed the Atlantic and visited Rome. Some time later he spent more than a year in European travel, mainly on account of his health. On his return he went to his new field of labor, which did not prove a fortunate one. He had been suffering several years with some form of heart disease, which was further aggravated by the high altitude of Cheyenne. His rapid decline was attributed to this change. Bishop Lenihan was one of the ablest and most widely known missionary priests of the Middle West. Aside from his great learning he was a man of large executive ability and much force of character. Fortunate in the possession of engaging manners, he was quite as popular and influential with Protestants as with his own people. This was shown by his success in the erection of his splendid church in Ft. Dodge. He was able to induce people who were not Catholics to make liberal contributions toward the erection of the edifice, which, at that time, was one of the finest Catholic churches in Iowa. When he went to Ft. Dodge his parish extended far beyond the limits of Webster county, necessitating visits to many points throughout the northwestern quarter of the State. But gradually, as the country was settled, the territory was divided and subdivided, creating other parishes, until only Ft. Dodge and some portions of the adjacent farming country remained in his church. But he had done his work so well that very soon after he had left for Cheyenne, Archbishop Hennessy deemed it advisable to erect three parishes—much to the regret of the people—from the congregation of Corpus Christi. Bishop Lenihan's circle of friends was a wide one, including not only his large acquaintance in and outside of his church, in Iowa and Wyoming, but such eminent dignitaries as Cardinals Gibbons, Satolli and Martinelli, and Archbishops Ireland and Ryan. His brother, Rev. M. C. Lenihan, at whose home the Bishop died, is pastor of the Catholic church at Marshalltown, and his cousin, Rev. B. C. Lenehan, of the Church of the Sacred Heart at Boone. The family is well known throughout the State. The death of "Father Tom," as he was familiarly called a generation ago, was the occasion of profound and widespread regret.

WILLIAM FITCH CONRAD was born in Ithaca, N. Y., Nov. 7, 1826; he died in Des Moines, Iowa, Dec. 20, 1901. His paternal grandfather was a soldier in the revolution, rising to the grade of major. Judge Conrad was educated at the Wesleyan Seminary at Lima, N. Y., and at the Wesleyan University at Middletown, Conn. He engaged awhile in teaching, meantime studying law. He came to Iowa and settled in Burlington in 1855. In August of that year he enlisted in the 25th Iowa Infantry, and was at once appointed sergeant-major. He rose to the rank of captain, his commission bearing the signature of Abraham Lincoln. He was captured by the Confederates at Raymond, Miss., May 24, 1863, and spent a year and a half in prison, including some time in the Libby at Richmond. He escaped at Columbia, S. C., and after walking 500 miles, evading bloodhounds and armed men, reached the Union lines at Knoxville, Tenn. Obtaining a leave of absence of 30 days, he came home to Iowa. But before his leave of absence expired he was ordered to Fort Snelling, Minn., where he remained

until the close of the war. He removed to Canton, Mo., in 1865, and began the practice of the law. In 1876 he returned to Iowa, settling in Des Moines, and engaged in the practice of his profession. Ten years later he was elected to the district bench where he served until his death. Judge Conrad's life had been an eventful one, deserving more space in its narration than we can devote to it at this time. His record as a man and a soldier is without blot or stain. His fifteen years of able and arduous service on the bench brought him the highest praise from the entire community. He was a loyal and abiding friend, and in every respect an excellent Christian gentleman. The journals of Des Moines devoted many columns to sketches of his useful career and estimates of his character and abilities.

HENRY HOSPERS was born in Hoog Blokland, the Netherlands, Feb. 6, 1830; he died in Orange City, Sioux county, Iowa, Oct. 21, 1901. He came to America in 1840, and settled in Pella, Marion county, where he lived until 1870, when he led a new colony to northwestern Iowa, and settled at Orange City. While living at Pella he was elected mayor of the town. His advent in Sioux county was during the reign of one of the old court house rings which had been flourishing for several years in many county seats in northwestern Iowa. Many of the counties were steeped in debt. The "authorities" issued county warrants without stint, and were engaged in schemes to squander the school and swamp land funds. Mr. Hospers redeemed his county from the clutches of one of these rings, and was instrumental in making it one of the best governed counties in the State. He became a banker at Orange City, acquiring considerable wealth. He was elected a member of the house of the 22d and 23d general assemblies, and later on served a term of four years in the senate. While a quiet man for the most part, he still had much influence, arising from his well known business character and integrity. He was regarded as the father of the prosperous town of Orange City, and was held in the highest respect by all who knew him. Few men have done more for the cause of public education. Cyrenus Cole, in his article on Pella, which was published in THE ANNALS for January, 1898, paid a high tribute to Mr. Hospers, and the article was accompanied by a portrait of that excellent man. In his death the State of Iowa lost one of its most upright men and useful citizens.

FRANK H. PEAVEY was born in Eastport, Me., Jan. 18, 1850; he died in Chicago, Ill., Dec. 30, 1901. Mr. Peavey came to Sioux City, Iowa, in 1867, where he first found employment with the agricultural implement firm of the Messrs. Booge & Co. Since that time his rise to the high position he occupied at his death has been phenomenally rapid. He removed to Minneapolis in 1884, where he became one of the largest owners of grain elevators in this country if not in the world. He was also a large owner of railroad properties and of lake steamers. Starting as a newsboy at Eastport, Maine, at the age of 14, he had become the possessor of millions. It would require many pages to enumerate the business interests—many of the first magnitude—with which he was connected. Personally, he was one of the most commanding figures and finest looking men, and socially and at all times a most pleasant gentleman. He was also the dispenser of liberal charities—a large-hearted, broad-minded philanthropist. For many years he had taken a deep interest in the newsboys of Minneapolis, and had arranged to give to every one at the end of the year double the amount he had saved. He was also a generous giver in the founding of hospitals and libraries. His wife was a daughter of the late Judge George G. Wright, of Des Moines. As a former Iowa business man of the highest and best type, Mr. Peavey deserves a more extended notice than can be given in this place. The newspapers of Sioux City, Des Moines, Minneapolis and St. Paul, of Dec. 31, 1901, paid the highest tributes to his memory.

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